

## Press Release: March 8, 2016

Title: A NEW Wild Craft Play Adventure Program for children ages 6-12 opened in January at the Errington War Memorial Hall

Links:

[www.facebook.com/wildcraftplay](http://www.facebook.com/wildcraftplay) , [www.facebook.com/bodytalkproject](http://www.facebook.com/bodytalkproject) or [www.crimsoncoast.org](http://www.crimsoncoast.org),  
[www.vestaeducation.com](http://www.vestaeducation.com) , [www.SoLeAdventure.ca](http://www.SoLeAdventure.ca), [www.ErringtonFarmersMarket.ca](http://www.ErringtonFarmersMarket.ca) ,  
[www.erringtonhall.bc.ca](http://www.erringtonhall.bc.ca), [www.wildcraftplay.com](http://www.wildcraftplay.com)

Photos attached.

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Write-Up:-

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What happens when you mix raw, wild nature with a craft of the imagination and true authentic play? You get a masterpiece. Jamie Black is launching Wild Craft Play, a NEW program, like a club, in Errington. Where children, youth and families are invited to “Craft their Inner Wild,” become “Coyote Mentors,” and be a part of an annual Production at the Errington War Memorial Hall. Based on years of experience and research, Jamie Black has decided to offer her skills as a dramatic storyteller and nature-based mentor to develop the life-skills of children, youth and families in her community.

Jamie has experience working with youth at risk, social and physical needs, and calls herself an Adventure Interventionist. She uses adventure, nature-based play, and raw nature to support children, youth and families to overcome life’s obstacles. Recently, Jamie has partnered with Michael Addiscott, to offer higher-action adventures in the forest for more children, youth and families starting in April.

As you may recall, a few months ago, Jamie piloted a Travelling Trade Post at the Errington Farmer’s Market and it was a huge success. The youth and families were ecstatic and the Farmer’s Market members had a warm and inviting response, so much so that people are keen to see the program

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offered again next summer. From this experience, Jamie has decided to offer programming year-round at the Errington War Memorial Hall, and Errington Farmer's Market to enhance life skills through life-altering play. This includes live-action role play in a video-game setting where the children become the characters of the game, and the quests are experienced in real-life conditions. Over the fall and winter seasons, it will be an indoor/outdoor experience based on the weather. The Errington War Memorial Hall and the Errington Community Park provide a rich, natural environment thriving with inspiration for creative play. Jamie's vision is for Wild Craft Play to become a school of dramatic adventure in her community, neighboring communities and eventually around the world.

Jamie has defined the words Wild, Craft and Play to help capture a glimpse of what you might experience in Wild Craft Play if you sign up. Definitions derived from ~ [www.Dictionary.com](http://www.Dictionary.com):

**“Wild”** ~ Live-Action Role-Play in a state of nature, not tamed or domesticated. Uncultivated and uninhibited. Wild feelings or excitement portrayed as actions or a person's appearance. Frantic or distracted, maybe even considered crazy. Igniting you to “Craft your Inner Wild.”

**“Craft”** ~ An art, trade or occupation requiring special manual skills of crafting, sewing, pouch and costume making, prop development and projection. Members of a trade or professional collective or guild of the Wild Craft Play group, as a community, we are considered a ship or vessel, together as one.

**“Play”** ~ A composition or piece played as a dramatic performance on a stage. Engaged in exercise or activity for amusement and recreation that is fun or jest, as opposed to seriousness or messy. The manner or style of playing or doing something... fun! The act of playing or conducting of a game, engaging in an adventure, as one.

## How to engage:

Check out our website [www.wildcraftplay.com](http://www.wildcraftplay.com) and [www.facebook.com/wildcraftplay](http://www.facebook.com/wildcraftplay). Dress for the weather, come well fed, with snacks, water and an appetite for adventure. You never know what Fate may have in store for you. This program is for children ages 6-14, who are the Wild Craft Players. You are the creatures; the creators of play. You are the heart of Wild Craft Play. This is your chance to let your life-force shine. You can expect free play in nature, in creative theatrical play creation, in performing on the Errington Farmer's Market outdoor stage, and in being the brilliant wonder you are.

For youthful people, ages 14 and up, this is an opportunity for you to develop your mentorship skills. If you engage in this group, you get to be trained by Jamie and other adult mentors in ways of Coyote Mentoring and Guided Discovery Learning. This requires you to commit an extra 2 hours after each session to reflect on what you experienced and deepen your understanding of your role as a mentor.

## Where did this come from?

Jamie Black has been in this community for years both as a nature-based mentor and in the performing arts. She has found a way to craft the two concepts together in a Live-Action Role-Play environment that ignites imagination in children so satiating, it feels like they are IN a videogame. A recent study,

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produced by the Research Institute in the United States, interviewed over 6000 teens and revealed a fascinating result. Out of all of their answers, the number one thing that children consider as the best way to ignite their spark inside them is through the arts: drama, performing arts, dance, music, art, etc. For more information on the results of this research, you can go to the Facebook page "Wild Craft Play" to watch the Ted Talk.

Infuse this reality with the power of a deep connection to nature and an expression of "self." Deeper define ourselves through character development and role play in nature. This is just one aspect of what you can expect in this group. Jamie's crafty character development over the years has brought her to a new level of skill and performance in many aspects. Jamie has been contracted with her local Nanaimo circus troupe called Vesta Entertainment with Karina Strong. Not only has Jamie been performing with this troupe for over 4 years, but now she teaches circus, poi, character development, choreographs and creates productions with all ages. She has taught in 3 different schools across Vancouver Island, thanks to a grant secured by Vesta through Art Starts called "Artists in the Schools." See [www.vestaeducation.com](http://www.vestaeducation.com) for more information. Jamie's circus niche is Dramatic Storytelling, Poi Spinning, Dance Choreography, Stilting and Character Development. She also brings in the elements of shadow production and creative storylining to entice the audience and engage participation. She has worked directly with Ward Norcutt, high school drama teacher at Dover Bay Secondary School, grade 9 class, developing a production to teach grade 7 students about drug awareness prevention. She was also contracted through Vesta Entertainment to teach grade 2 and grade 3 students with Mr. Derek DeGear to ignite the passion of self-discovery through circus skills and performance. Finally, Jamie travelled to Victoria on a weekly basis to Central Middle School where she is taught a keen group of grade 8 students Poi and Theatrical Character Development for their annual "Cirque de 7 due" led by Mr. Roger Duvall.

If that isn't enough, Jamie Black is also back as The Community Engagement Facilitator for Crimson Coast Dance Society for the life-altering youth program called Body Talk. [www.facebook.com/bodytalkproject](http://www.facebook.com/bodytalkproject) or [www.crimsoncoast.org](http://www.crimsoncoast.org). Her role as a facilitator for this program, lasting from October to May, is to mentor the youth in the development of a community engagement workshop during spring break along with a performance at the Port Theatre. This weekend, the youth get to meet the Artistic Pedagogue, Dianna David, who is making moves with the youth to deepen their roots and enhance their confidence through performance and mentorship.

Jamie's portfolio has multiplied in the past couple of years; and now, with her Masters Thesis almost complete, Jamie is excited about launching her baby for more reasons than just fun! Jamie found a way to study her Wild Craft Play program for her thesis research by video recording herself and the children in creative and wild play in nature to determine how the role of the mentor affects the level of engagement of the children. With her defense for her thesis coming up in early March, Jamie is keen to have her work published and ready to share her findings with us all; so stay tuned!

You may recognize Jamie as a local nature enthusiast. Her background as an outdoor guide, as a leader and mentor for over 15 years in sailing, rock climbing, caving, canoeing, wilderness survival and years of summer camps ignited her passion for adventure. While out at Horne Lake Caves in 2011, Jamie was driven to understand why teachers and program leaders made the effort they did to get children out into nature. Jamie wanted to find more ways to support teachers in providing a deep connection

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with nature. This is what spurred Jamie to challenge her degree and go for her Master's Degree in Environmental Education and Communication through Royal Roads University in Victoria, June of 2013.

When Jamie piloted Wild Craft Play in the Errington Community during the Saturday Farmer's Markets this past summer, she wanted to see if there was an interest. To see if it made sense to run such a program at a farmer's market. She was curious to see if it was something she could offer on a regular basis. The turnout for the program was fantastic and not only did the children enjoy it, they often did not want to leave. News of this the Farmer's Market Board and they now anticipate bringing the program back for another summer season. This extended further invitations in the community to attend the Tibetan Happy Festival on October 3, 2015 where Jamie, as Fate, and her comrade "The Old Man" hosted a fantastical Wild Craft Play treasure hunt through the forest for a bundle of children. To see more of this production go to [www.facebook.com/wildcraftplay](http://www.facebook.com/wildcraftplay).

As you can imagine, this amount of production takes a lot of work, time and effort, but Jamie thrives off of this level of community engagement, and is willing to do this annually. Though, not without the help of some experienced Wild Craft Play Mentors, grant writers, videographers, video editors, production crew, funders, and philanthropists. So if this intrigues you, and you are seeking an opportunity for growth and community engagement, Jamie invites you to call at 250-927-7923 or email at [jamie@wildcraftplay.com](mailto:jamie@wildcraftplay.com). Jamie believes that "it takes a community to raise a child" and these types of programs take time, money, resources and skill. Jamie is willing to facilitate this experience and offer her skills for the first 3 months for free to get this program started. She hopes that by January 2016, there will be enough community support to sustain this thriving group in the form of a club. In addition to Jamie's efforts, the Errington War Memorial Hall is offering free rental for the first 6 months to inspire engagement and support our youth community!

If you want to get involved there are a number of ways to play!

**As a participant (ages 6-12).** You can register by contacting Jamie Black at 250-927-7923 or emailing [jamie@wildcraftplay.com](mailto:jamie@wildcraftplay.com).

**As a youthful mentor (ages 14 and up).** If you want to learn more skills as a mentor, you need to sign up and will be required to attend the Wild Craft Play group along with the participants, pay the membership fee, and hang around after the program for an additional 2 hours each session to deepen the understanding of your role as a mentor.

**As a planner.** As you can imagine, ventures of the arts and nature-connection take planning, development, decision making, procedures, protocol development and infrastructure. We are seeking grant writers, videographers, video editors, sponsorship seekers, and an administrator. By January 2016, we are seeking a board to develop this community venture.

**As a funder/philanthropist.** If this initiative intrigues you, please feel free to contact us to have a conversation about how this opportunity might match your values and how we can support your initiative!

All members must pay a membership fee of \$50 for one, or \$80 for a family, to cover the cost of insurance and initial resources for the start-up of this group. Come January, the goal is to invite enough

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sponsors, donations and community engagement that children and their families won't have to pay for the additional costs of administration, facilitation, promotion and resources that will start in January, necessary to provide an enriching program.

The group will meet 2 Saturdays a month starting November 14, 2015. We meet at the Errington War Memorial Hall in front of the hall from 11am until 2pm (3 hours). Dress for the weather, be well fed, pack a snack, water and your imagination. There will be no group program in December and we will re-convene in January. We are excited to put on a production at the Errington War Memorial Hall in late May and will bring the Winter Season of Wild Craft Play to a close in June 2016. Then, once the Errington Farmer's Market starts up again, Wild Craft Play is invited to transition into a community service program with a different level of life skill development from June until September. Expect to hear more about the adventures through our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/wildcraftplay](http://www.facebook.com/wildcraftplay) and stay tuned for info on our upcoming website [www.wildcraftplay.com](http://www.wildcraftplay.com). Any further questions, please contact Jamie Black directly 250-927-7923 or [jamie@wildcraftplay.com](mailto:jamie@wildcraftplay.com).